D5.4 Info Event 1: 1-Day Project Launch Event

Tourism-Zero Project Launch Event at
National University of Laos, Lao PDR

Co-funded by
the European Union

Project 101179654 Tourism-Zero

Deliverable Information

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Executive summary

This report is a collection of the information related to the National University of Laos project launch event D5.4 that was held in Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR on 28th February 2025. The National University of Laos Project Launch Event, that is part of the WP 5 – Dissemination and Awareness Raising, aimed to present the project in National University of Laos' staff and relevant stakeholders, thus engaging the participants since the very beginning. The event drew a group of 90 participants from the project's target groups, including academics, students, alumni, representatives from public and private tourism operations, while also media representatives were invited in order to strengthen the events' promotion and Tourism-Zero's dissemination networks.

The report collected information about:

- General information;
- Event Description
- Participants;
- Activities and sessions;
- Communication of the event
- Feedback and Evaluation
- Additional information

1. General Information

Include general information on the project name and event:

- Project name: Tourism-Zero
- Event title: Tourism-Zero Project Launch Event
- Partner university: National University of Laos (NUOL)
- Location (city, country): Xaythany, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR
- Date of event: 28th February 2025
- Event coordinator (name and contact information): Dr. Soubin Sisavath, soubin@nuol.edu.la

2. Event Description

As part of WP5 – Dissemination and Awareness Raising, the Tourism-Zero project launch event served to broaden the understanding of Tourism-Zero project among academic, public, and business communities. The event provided a comprehensive overview of the project, including its expected deliverables, with specific attention to curriculum development for zero-waste management within hospitality and tourism sectors. The event also emphasized the critical role of promoting sustainable waste management, specifically the integration of zero-waste principles, into both tourism education and industry practices.

Table 1. Agenda of Project Launch Event

Date Friday, 28th February 2025
Time 08:30 – 16:00
Venue Multimedia meeting room at Laos-Japan Institute
National University of Laos (NUOL), Dong Dok Campus

Time	Activity/Content	Responsible Person
08:30 – 09:00	Registration	All participants
09:00 – 09:10	Guest introduction	MC
09:10 – 09:20	Opening remarks	***Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ounla Sivanpheng***, Vice President of National University of Laos (NUOL)
09:20 – 09:50	Introduction of: ***1. Academic programs on tourism and hotel management*** ***2. Student activities on ecotourism and tourism planning***	Representatives from: **1. *Asst. Prof. Sypaphay Pantayanon*** Head of Tourism and Hotel Management, Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS) 2. **Asst. Prof. Viengsy Paothor**, Deputy Head of Natural Conservation, Faculty of Forestry Sciences (FFS) 3. **Asst. Prof. Souvannapha Vongsay**, Head of French Language, Faculty of Letters (FOL)
09:50 – 10:20	Introduction of ***Tourism-Zero*** Project	***Dr. Soubin Sisavath*** Tourism-Zero Project Coordinator for NUOL

10:20 – 10:30	Coffee break	All participants
10:30 – 11:50	Discussion theme: ***University-business cooperation to prepare graduates for zero-waste hospitality and tourism***	Moderator: ***Dr. Toulany Thavisay***, Lecturer of Faculty of Economics and Business Managment Panellists: 4. ***Ms. Philaprachith Prachittham*** Group Human Resource Manager, INTHIRA Group (tourism & hospitality business) 5. ***Ms. Manichane Phanvathvongsouk*** Vice President of Lao Association of Travel Agents, and Director of MP Tour Co., Ltd **6. *Asst. Prof. Sypaphay Pantayanon*** Head of Tourism and Hotel Management, FSS, NUOL
11:50 – 12:00	Lunch break	
13:30 – 16:00	Discussion theme: • ***Design of Zero-waste tourism courses*** • ***Development of teaching materials*** • ***Course accreditation and piloting***	Project team members and University Academic authorities
16:00 – 16:30	Summary and closing	

- **Keynote speakers**:
  - **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ounla Sivanpheng**, Vice President of the National University of Laos (NUOL)
  - **Asst. Prof. Sypaphay Pantayanon**, Head of Tourism and Hotel Management, Faculty of Social Science, National University of Laos
  - **Asst. Prof. Viengsy Paothor**, Deputy Head of Natural Conservation, Faculty of Forestry Sciences, National University of Laos
  - **Asst. Prof. Souvannapha Vongsay**, Head of French Language, Faculty of Letters, National University of Laos
- **Guest of honor**
  - **Ms. Philaprachith Prachittham**, Group Huam Resource Manager, INTHIRA Group (Tourism and Hospitality Business)
  - **Ms. Manichane Phanvathvongsouk**, Vice President of Lao Association of Travel Agents, and Director of MP Tour Co., Ltd
  - **Mr. Vatthana Atanaphone**, Project Officer, Delegation of the European Union to the Lao PDR
  - **Ms. Keodokmai Vongphachanh**, Technical Official, Department of Tourism Business Administration, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism

3. Participants

A total of 90 participants (35 females), representing academia, public agencies, and the business sector, attended the project launch event. Detailed participant information can be accessed via the following link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/13-g5CfA_V2ZWAOxbnnmOnMcpffnm92Mc/view?usp=share_link

4. Activities and Session

The event was divided into five sessions as following:

- **Opening Session**
  Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ounla Sivanpheng, Vice President of NUOL, chaired the event and delivered the welcome remarks. In his remarks, he highlighted NUOL's commitment to advancing sustainable tourism education and fostering international cooperation with higher education institutions from Europe under the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme.

- **Overview of Tourism Education at NUOL**
  Presentations from representatives of Faculties of Social Sciences, Letters, and Forestry Sciences provided an overview of the tourism and hotel management programs offered at NUOL. In addition to the academic courses, these presentations emphasized the enhancement of student knowledge and practical skills through experiential learning opportunities, including internships, student exchange programs, and the organization of tour programs.

- **Project Introduction**
  One of the project team members – **Dr. Soubin Sisavath**, Project coordinator– provided participants with the overview of the Tourism-Zero Project, outlining its expected outputs and detailing both current and future activities. Participants gained a clear understanding of the project and potential avenues for involvement.

- **Panel Discussion: University-Business Cooperation**
  Dr. Toulany Thavisay moderated a panel discussion focused on providing valuable insights into skill requirements and actionable strategies for zero-waste management within the hospitality and tourism industry, from both academic and practical viewpoints. The session also examined the potential for effective university-business partnerships. Panellists Asst. Prof. Sypaphay Pantayanon, Ms. Philaprachith Prachittham, and Ms. Manichane Phanvathvongsouk underscored the critical knowledge and skills necessary for promoting zero-waste management, including self-discipline in waste handling, collaborative problem-solving, and strong communication abilities. They also emphasized the

significance of incorporating industry feedback into course development and pilot programs, particularly through internships and work placement opportunities for students in the hospitality and tourism sectors.

- **Academic Discussion**
  A discussion between project team members and university academic authorities focused on the development of courses in zero-waste tourism management. This session aimed to inform the university authorities on the course curriculum, the development of instructional materials, and discussed the procedures for accreditation and pilot implementation.

5. Communication of the Event

To ensure comprehensive outreach, pre-event communication included the distribution of official announcements to all university faculties and the formal invitations to diverse stakeholders, including public agencies, private companies and travel agencies. Media representatives were also engaged to provide coverage of the event across online news platforms and newspaper outlets. As a result, the event stories were published in several news outlets both online and offline. Links:

6. Feedback and Evaluation

Participants were asked to give feedback and evaluate the event organizations through online questionnaires. The results are presented as follows:

Feedback on open questions

- **What did you like the most about the event?**
  - Many appreciated the development of the Zero-Waste Tourism course and found the topic relevant and useful.
  - Participants liked the structured and well-organized nature of the event. The event was described as systematic and well-arranged, making it easy to follow.
  - The presentations and speeches were engaging and well-prepared. The concise and effective delivery from different speakers was highly appreciated.
  - Some participants mentioned that they enjoyed meeting and interacting with others during the event.

- **What did you like the least about the event?**
  - Some activities were difficult to participate in and lacked clear explanations.
  - A few attendees found certain presentations to be less engaging or not concise enough.

- **Please give us your feedback or suggestions for improvement**
    - Increase interactive elements, such as Q&A sessions and participant discussions.
    - Improve time allocation for presentations to ensure a balanced schedule.
    - Provide clearer guidance on waste management practices and waste segregation.
    - Enhance accessibility by distributing relevant documents and ensuring water availability.
    - Consider larger or less crowded venues for better comfort.
    - Encourage more student participation for broader knowledge sharing.
    - Continue hosting similar training sessions with practical implementation.
    - Invite real-life practitioners to share their experiences.

Evaluation results

1. **Event organization**

The event received mostly positive feedback from 75 participants who completed the evaluation questionnaire, with average ratings ranging from 3.9 to 4.2 out of 5 (5-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree). The highest-rated aspect was the usefulness of the subjects and themes discussed (4.2), indicating that attendees found the content valuable. Participants also appreciated the clarity of the event's goals (4.1) and the provided logistical information (4.1). The materials distributed were considered sufficient, receiving a rating of 4.0. However, some areas for improvement were identified, including the overall organization (3.9), session content (3.9), and level of interaction (3.9), with some respondents suggesting more interactive activities and deeper discussions. While the event was well-received, future improvements could include enhancing engagement through interactive sessions, refining event organization, and providing more in-depth content to maximize attendee satisfaction.

Table 2. Participants' perception on the event organization

Evaluation Criteria	**Average**
The overall organization of the event fulfilled my expectations	3.9
The goals of the event were clear and satisfactory	4.1
The subjects/themes that were discussed were useful	4.2
The contents of the different sessions were sufficient	3.9
The level of interaction was appropriate for this event	3.9

The information (e.g., agenda, direction, logistics) was clear	4.1
The materials distributed were sufficient	4.0

(Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

The event received highly positive feedback based on the Yes/No evaluation, with most aspects rated above 90% in approval. All participants (100%) agreed that the combination of participants and speakers was appropriate, and they were fully satisfied with the overall organization and effectiveness of the event. The location and technical equipment were also well-received, with 98.7% of attendees finding them appropriate and efficient. The event program, including breaks and sections, was considered functional by 93.3% of respondents, while 96% found the event coordination effective. Additionally, 90.7% of participants were satisfied with the overall duration of the event (Just fine for me). These results indicate a well-organized and well-executed event, with minor room for improvement in scheduling and coordination.

Table 3. Participants' perception on event components

Evaluation Criteria	**Positive Response (Yes)**
The location of the event was appropriate for me	98.7%
The programme of the event was functional (breaks, sections, etc.)	93.3%
The coordination of the event was effective	96%
The available technical equipment was sufficient and efficient	98.7%
The combination of participants/speakers was appropriate for me	100%
The overall organization and realization of the event was satisfactory and effective	100%
*In overall, do you think the duration of the event was appropriate	90.7%

(*Rating: 1 = Yes, 0 = No; 1 = Just fine for me, 2 = Too short, 3 = Too long*)

2. Impact of the event

The event effectively raised awareness and motivation regarding sustainability topics, receiving positive feedback from participants. The highest-rated aspect (4.2) was the encouragement to share zero-waste management practices with family, friends, and social networks, indicating strong engagement and willingness to spread knowledge. Awareness of sustainable tourism, zero-waste management (4.1), and motivation to make sustainable choices in tourism-related activities (4.1) were also highly rated. Participants felt motivated to engage in future project activities (4.1) and reported increased knowledge about waste management in the hospitality and tourism sector (3.9). The overall event rating was 4.0, demonstrating a successful initiative with room for further improvement in deepening knowledge and engagement strategies.

Table 4. Participants' perception on impact of the event

Evaluation Criteria	**Average**
I am more aware of sustainable development	3.9
I am more aware of waste-management	4.0
I am more aware of sustainable tourism, zero-waste management	4.1
I am more aware of collaborative practices to achieve sustainable development	4.0
I increased my knowledge about waste management in the hospitality and tourism sector	3.9
I feel more motivated to make sustainable choices in my tourism-related activities	4.1
I feel encouraged to share practices of zero-waste management with family, friends, and other social networks	4.2
The insights I got motivate me to participate in other activities of the project in the future	4.1
How would you rate the event overall?	**4.0**

(*Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree*)

7. Additional Information

Supporting documents, such as presentation, event agenda, participant lists, media coverage, and evaluation responses:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1o2c2_1v47wnZitQBvQal2agNH1HyVDUj?usp=share_link

Photographs

TOURISM-ZERO
Development of Zero-Waste Tourism Courses
01 Responsible Consumers and Global Warming Impacts of Waste
02 Zero Waste in Tourism Activities
03 Waste Management under Municipal Context
04 Environmental Impact Assessment
CMU

Co-funded by the European Union
Discussion theme:
University-business cooperation to prepare graduates for zero-waste hospitality and tourism
OUR SPEAKERS:
MODERATOR:
TOURISM-ZERO
Development of Zero-Waste Tourism Courses
Training Courses of Academic Staff
TOURISM ZERO

TOURISM-ZERO
TOURISM

ຄະນະນຳ ມຊ

ຄະນະວິທະຍາສາດປ່າໄມ້
ພາກວິຊາອະນຸຮັກທຳມະຊາດ
Faculty of Forest Science
Department of Nature conservation
ຫຼັກສູດປະລິນຍາຕີຄະນະວິທະຍາສາດປ່າໄມ້
ສາຂາການທ່ອງທ່ຽວອະນຸຮັກ
Bachelor of Forest Science Program in Ecotourism
ຫຼັກສູດປະລິນຍາຕີຄະນະວິທະຍາສາດປ່າໄມ້
ສາຂາການອະນຸຮັກປ່າໄມ້ ແລະ ສັດປ່າ
Bachelor of Science Program in Forest and Wildlife Conservation

tourismzero.com
Introduction of
Tourism-Zero
Project
Soubin Sisavath, Ph.D.
National University of Laos
Vientiane, Lao PDR
28th February 2025
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Curriculum Development for Zero Waste Management in the Hospitality and Tourism Sector (Tourism-Zero)
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